



MEETING OF THE
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN
CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

March 19, 2007

MARIN COUNTY CIVIC CENTER
3501 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE
SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA

MEETING MINUTES
REVISED

COC Members Present: Don Wilhelm
Barbara George
Robert Burton
Ray Hirsch

Staff Members Present: Dianne Steinhauser, TAM Executive Director
Li Zhang, TAM Manager of Finance and Administration

Vice Chairperson Wilhelm called the Citizens' Oversight Committee meeting to order at approximately 5:12 p.m.

1. Introductions

Committee members and staff did self-introductions.

2. Approval of Minutes of January 22, 2007 (Action)

Action could not be taken since no quorum was formed.

3. Committee Member Reports (Discussion)

None

4. TAM Report

Since only four of the COC members made it to the meeting, Dianne Steinhauser suggested that the group save all other items for the next meeting. Robert Burton said staff should ask for reply in the future to make sure a quorum can be formed for the meeting, and also asked that regular members contact their alternate to attend when the member cannot. ED Steinhauser said TAM staff will send out the meeting schedule for the whole year as well as an individual meeting notice out two weeks in advance of the upcoming meeting. Staff will follow up with phone calls or e-mails to the members who don't reply. Ms. George suggested that staff ask for comments on the annual report by e-mail. The group agreed that since approval of the COC annual report is the only action item and no other major activities are anticipated in April, the April COC meeting will be canceled and the next meeting will be in May. ED Steinhauser said staff will summarize all changes and approve the report in May.

The group then had a brief discussion on the Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA) funding received for the Marin Sonoma Narrows Project. ED Steinhauser said that too much power was given to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) during CMIA funding distribution process and the legislators are taking away this power from CTC for the other programs. Mr. Burton said that adding carpools is Marin only means to get people through the bottleneck two minutes sooner. ED Steinhauser responded, "We have to start somewhere." Mr. Burton then commented that strong carpool enforcement measures are

needed to stop the carpool violators. Mr. Wilhelm asked about the public involvement process for the project. ED Steinhauser said that the project is only in the draft discussion stage and that there will be an extensive public outreach process.

5. MCTD Report (Discussion)

Item 5 was moved before Item 3. ED Steinhauser introduced Director of Marin County Department of Public Works, Farhad Mansourian, and the Planning Manager of Marin County Transit District (MCTD), Amy Van Doren to the group. Ms. Van Doren started the presentation by going through the information handed out at the meeting. The Draft MCTD Performance Measure Report was presented. Ms. Van Doren explained to the group that the report was prepared according to performance measure criteria set forth by TAM and monthly monitoring reports are prepared and available on MCTD's website. MCTD staff prepared a narrative report to the Board in November and noted that they are also doing a passage demographic survey in the county. Another survey will be conducted for the Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) update.

Ms. Van Doren then reported on MCTD's specific programs. New West Marin Stagecoach services were started in July 2006. Changes in service were described in the handouts. Three shuttle routes were launched in September 2006, replacing old routes. Demand for services was not high enough to support big buses. To reduce costs, MCTD started the shuttle services. Mr. Wilhelm asked about the performance of the shuttle services, and Ms. Van Doren said that all data were in the monthly reports. Ms. Van Doren then talked about the Youth Pass Program. MCTD provides free passes for low-income students who are eligible for the free and reduced price lunch programs. For students who are not eligible for a free pass, they can purchase a six-month pass for \$175. This program is to encourage students to take transit not only for school, but for other purposes too.

ED Steinhauser commented that MCTD staff has been very busy improving the transit system in Marin County. Ms. Van Doren's reports only provided samples of what MCTD has been working on. Mr. Hirsch commented on the name of Stagecoach, and asked whether bikes can be put on the front of the busses. Ms. Van Doren responded in the affirmative. ED Steinhauser asked how MCTD decides small bus vs. big bus. Ms. Van Doren responded that MCTD would look at the service demand and decided whether big buses are necessary or small buses are adequate. Mr. Burton asked why Golden Gate Transit (GGT) is buying different buses all the time, who runs the buses, and who hires the drivers? Ms. Van Doren said that MCTD has four contracts. In the case of GGT, GGT buys the buses and MCTD is responsible for the local match. Mr. Burton asked whether MCTD has any control on what GGT buys. Ms. Van Doren said that MCTD is involved in the purchase processes and MCTD requests the size of the buses to buy. Mr. Mansourian added that MCTD has three choices in terms of how to work with a contractor. The first choice is that MCTD buy all the buses. The second choice is that MCTD tells the contractor what to buy. However, since most of MCTD's contracts are short-term, shorter than the average life cycle of a bus, the Contractor would not be willing to do so. The third choice is to go with what the contractors have. Mr. Burton asked whether those buses meet the clean air bus requirements, and Ms. Van Doren responded in the affirmative. Ms. Van Doren also explained that it's usually more cost-effective to let GGT purchase the buses for their operations since they can do this with a big purchase order to get better price. ED Steinhauser confirmed that and said all Bay Area operators do that. Mr. Burton further expressed concerns on the environmental issue, efficiency, and maintenance costs of having different models of buses, and any increases in maintenance costs will need to be shared by GGT and MCTD. Mr. Mansourian responded that MCTD Board is very active on environmental issues. However, alternative fuel buses are

much more expensive. Contractors usually don't own them and don't want to spend twice the money to buy them. Mr. Mansourian also mentioned that if MCTD buys the buses from GGT at the end of the current contract, it will trigger all the labor issues and then will make the operating cost go up significantly. GGT has done all the research and they do use the cleanest buses available.

Mr. Mansourian said MCTD will celebrate its first birthday in May 2007. MCTD is a very young agency, with only three staff, and is facing all kinds of challenges. Without Measure A, MCTD would have to cut 50% of the services. Even with Measure A, MCTD still needs to cut unproductive services. Mr. Mansourian also explained how the senior and disabled population is being served in Marin. MCTD provides the legal required services, which is defined as service to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) eligible clients who reside within three-quarters of a mile from a regular fixed route during the hours it operates. MCTD has initiated a taxi service under its contract with Whistlestop to improve its ability to provide trips located outside the ADA- mandated service area. Prior to implementing the taxi service, denials of non-mandated service request averaged about 30%. Since implementation in November, MCTD has been able to meet an average of 94% of the trips requested. As the demand for Paratransit services rise, it is more difficult to meet all trip requests. Staff is looking at the options for expanding taxi services. Ms. George asked how MCTD makes the decision of which non-ADA trips will be denied. Ms. Van Doren said the service is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Whistle Stop will satisfy all mandatory trips and then schedule non-mandated trips as additional capacity is available. The trip can be reserved 24 hours in advance.

Mr. Hirsch asked whether TAM loaned money to MCTD. ED Steinhauser explained that, due to the delay of Measure A sales tax revenues, TAM borrowed several millions dollars from the County and paid MCTD in advance so MCTD could avoid cutting services. The loan was repaid promptly after TAM received sufficient Measure A revenue to do so. Mr. Burton asked whether MCTD is going to change its name and logos on its buses. Ms. Van Doren said staff is working on it and did a television campaign last year. The MCTD Board will vote to adopt a logo and bus design at its June meeting. Though the contract with GGT will not allow them to change the design of buses. GGT will allow placement of the new logo on the buses.

Mr. Wilhelm said that MCTD needs to make sure all performance measure criteria are as defined in the Measure A Expenditure Plan. ED Steinhauser said TAM will work with MCTD on that. Mr. Wilhelm also raised the question in terms of how often MCTD should report to the COC. ED Steinhauser suggested they report on a quarterly basis. It may be adjusted based on the COC's meeting needs. Mr. Mansourian asked what the COC wants to see because MCTD can tailor the report to satisfy the needs of the group. Mr. Wilhelm asked TAM staff to mail the package out to other members who were not present at the meeting.

6. Review and Approval of the Draft FY2006 COC Annual Report (Action)

This item was postponed until May due to a lack of a quorum.

7. Open Time for Public Input

No public comments received.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:18 p.m.